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Advanced Dungeons & Dragons™

STORYBOOK

The Treasure of Time



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SEVERIN



The Treasure of Time

An ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS™

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Published by Marvel Books,
a division of Cadence Industries Corporation,
387 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016.
ISBN 0-939766-70-1

Printed in the U.S.A.

\$7.50
100%
3.57



A long time ago in the time of Magic and Legend, there lived an evil sorcerer named Kelek. Kelek had studied evil magic for many years, and his powers were great.

But Kelek was not satisfied. He wanted more power! He wanted to defeat all the good in the world.

One day, Kelek used his crystal ball to spy on Charmay. Charmay was a powerful magic user, too. But she used her magic for good.

Kelek watched as Charmay studied a magic scroll. The scroll told about a magical treasure—the Treasure of Time!

“The Treasure of Time! I must have it!” Kelek exclaimed. “With the Treasure of Time, my powers will be the greatest! No one will be able to defeat me!” So Kelek plotted to steal the scroll from Charmay and find the treasure for himself.





"I will turn myself into a bluebird and fly to Charmay's window," Kelek said. He uttered a magic word, and spiralling, colored lights surrounded him. In an instant, the evil sorcerer was changed into a beautiful bird.

"Oh, look, what a beautiful bird!" exclaimed Charmay as the bluebird fluttered into her chamber. "Have you come to visit me on this cold day? I'll get you some bread to eat."



As soon as Charmay turned her back, Kelek changed himself back to his real identity. Then, staring at the startled Charmay, he put a charm on her.

"You are under my power now," Kelek told her. "This charm will make you believe that I am your dearest friend." Kelek laughed a dry and scary laugh.

"Why, Kelek, how nice to see you," Charmay said with a warm smile. "Why do you visit me today?"

She was completely under his spell.



"You have something that I need, my dear Charmay," said Kelek. "Give me the scroll that tells of the Treasure of Time."

"Kelek, no," Charmay pleaded. "The Ancients have said that no one should disturb the Treasure of Time."

"I am not afraid. Give it to me—*now!*" Kelek's fierce glance held Charmay like a magnet. Reluctantly, she handed him the scroll.



"The Treasure of Time will soon be mine!" Kelek exclaimed. He could barely contain his joy as he walked down the path away from Charmay's dwelling.

He didn't notice a fierce little figure hiding behind a wall. It was Elkhorn, a fighter Dwarf who hated Kelek and his evil.

"What are you doing here, you vile serpent?" Elkhorn cried out, his dagger poised, ready to attack.



Suddenly, a voice called down from the chamber above. "No, Elkhorn! Don't!" It was Charmay, still under Kelek's spell.

"No harm must come to my friend Kelek!" she cried.



Elkhorn could not believe his ears. He stormed off toward town, furious that he had been denied the pleasure of fighting the evil sorcerer.

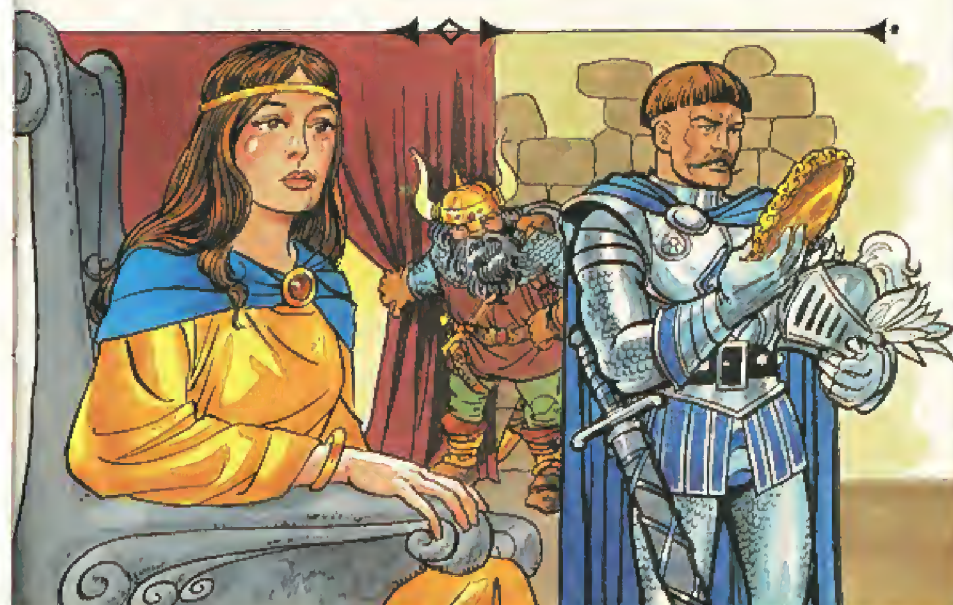


Later that day, Elkhorn sought out Strongheart. Strongheart was the greatest warrior in the land. He was the leader of the forces of good. "Wait until Strongheart hears what Charmay said to me," Elkhorn thought. "He will certainly be as angry as I am."

But when Strongheart heard the Dwarf's story, it was not anger he felt, but worry. "Charmay must be under a spell," Strongheart told his companion. "She would never protect Kelek for any other reason. We must go to her at once!"

One look at Charmay and Strongheart knew he was right. "There is evil magic at work here," he said. "But what does Kelek want?"

Strongheart realized that Charmay would tell him nothing. He turned to leave—but then he had an idea. He saw a magic mirror that Charmay sometimes used. "Perhaps this mirror will show me what Kelek is plotting," he said.





At first the image was dim. But as the magic became stronger, the picture grew clearer. Strongheart saw Kelek in the mirror. In Kelek's hand was the magic scroll he had taken from Charmay.

"The Treasure of Time! *That's* what he's after!" exclaimed Strongheart. "Elkhorn, we must stop him. We must get the treasure before Kelek uses its power for evil!"

As Strongheart watched Kelek, Kelek was also watching him. With him stood the assassin, Zarak. Kelek turned away from his crystal ball to talk to Zarak. "So, Strongheart thinks he can get to the treasure before me," Kelek said, his voice filled with hatred. "You won't allow that to happen—now, will you?"

Zarak vowed his obedience. Then he set off to make a trap in the forest for Strongheart and Elkhorn.





Using the magic mirror as a guide, Strongheart discovered that the Treasure of Time was hidden in the ruins of an ancient castle on the other side of the forest. He and his companion had not gone far when Strongheart suddenly stopped. "There is evil here. I can sense it," he said to Elkhorn.

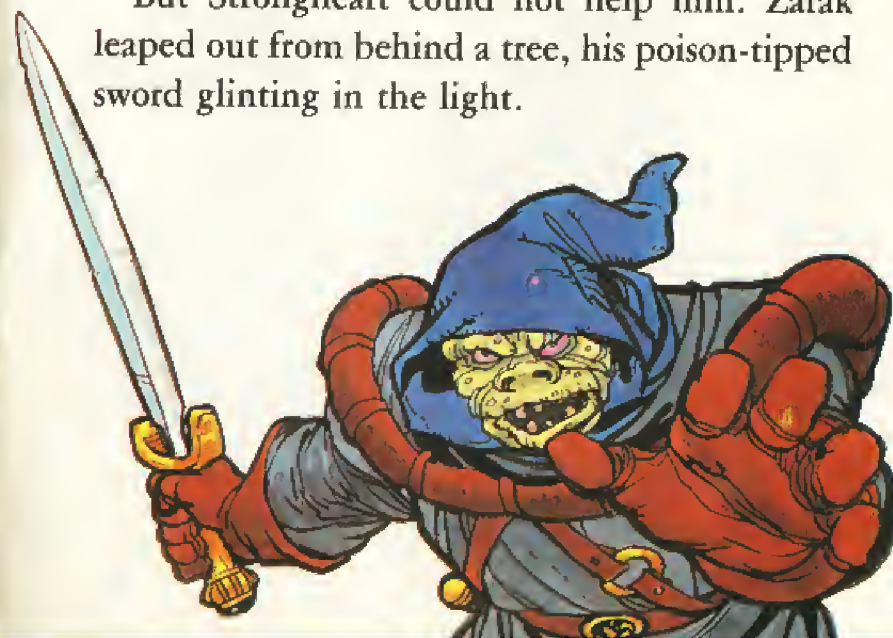
"But there is no one here but us," Elkhorn protested. "I see nothing. I hear nothing." With that, the Dwarf took a few steps forward and . . .



. . . a web of poisonous snakes dropped onto him!

"Help me!" Elkhorn cried, slashing with his dagger at the snakes that entangled him.

But Strongheart could not help him. Zarak leaped out from behind a tree, his poison-tipped sword glinting in the light.



“Zarak!” Strongheart called, stepping forward. “Your trap was meant for two. But now you must face me man to man!”

Sword clashed against sword. At first, Zarak seemed to have the better of Strongheart—but not for long. With one powerful blow from the flat of his sword, Strongheart knocked Zarak unconscious.



Slash! Strongheart’s sword attacked the web of snakes now. A few mighty strokes, and Elkhorn was free.

“Come! We must hurry!” cried Strongheart. “Kelek may have already beaten us to the Treasure of Time!”





Before long, Strongheart and Elkhorn came to the ruined castle. The image in the magic mirror told them to follow a crumbling stairway down into the ruins of an underground cavern.

Down, down they went. The air grew cold and damp. Soon there was no light at all. But Elkhorn, a Dwarf, could see in the dark. He led the great warrior by the hand.

Suddenly the gloom was broken by a shaft of golden light. Strongheart and Elkhorn stood and stared in silence—





—For there, suspended on the golden beam of light, stood a beautiful, jewelled chest—the Treasure of Time!

“We’re in time!” shouted Strongheart. He and his companion ran toward the treasure.

“Not quite,” called a raspy voice from the shadows. The jewelled treasure chest disappeared as Kelek stepped forward.

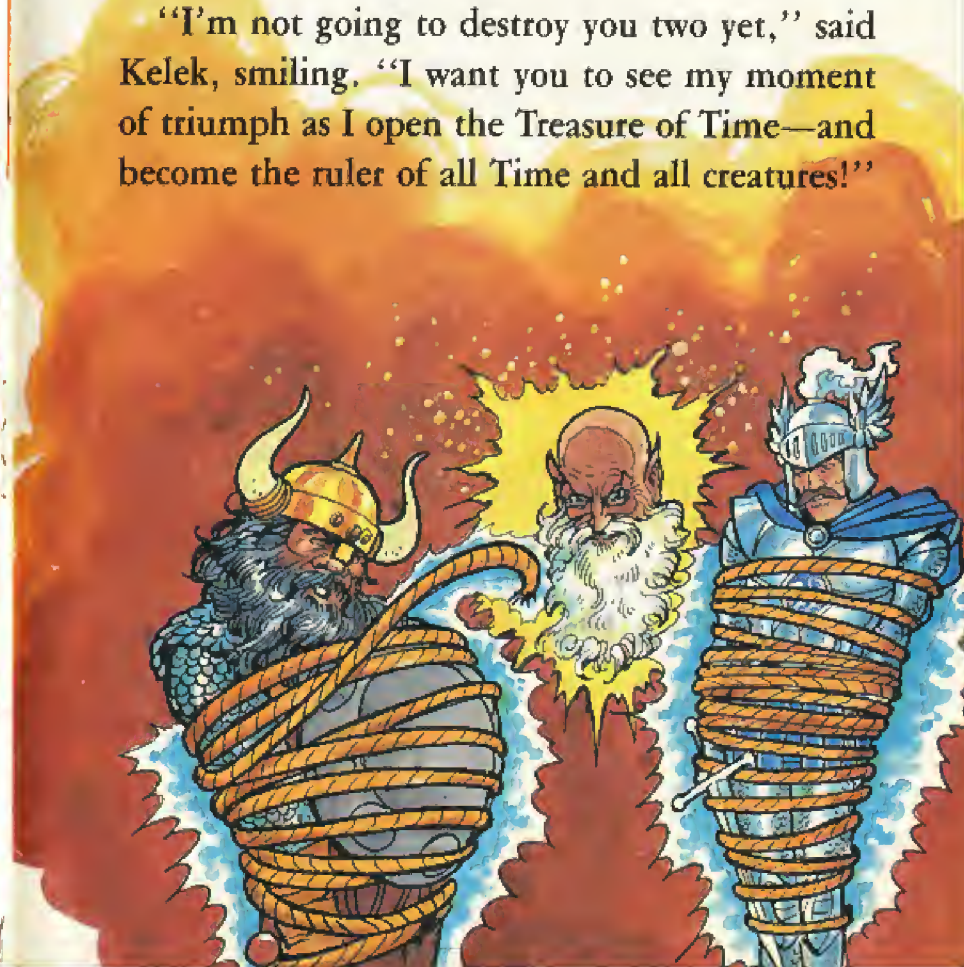


“An illusion!” Strongheart cried, realizing his mistake too late. He raised his sword to attack. “That was an illusion—but my blade is real!” he cried angrily.



In a flash, Kelek summoned a rope to wrap around his two pursuers. They stood helpless as Kelek pointed to the real treasure chest behind them.

“I’m not going to destroy you two yet,” said Kelek, smiling. “I want you to see my moment of triumph as I open the Treasure of Time—and become the ruler of all Time and all creatures!”

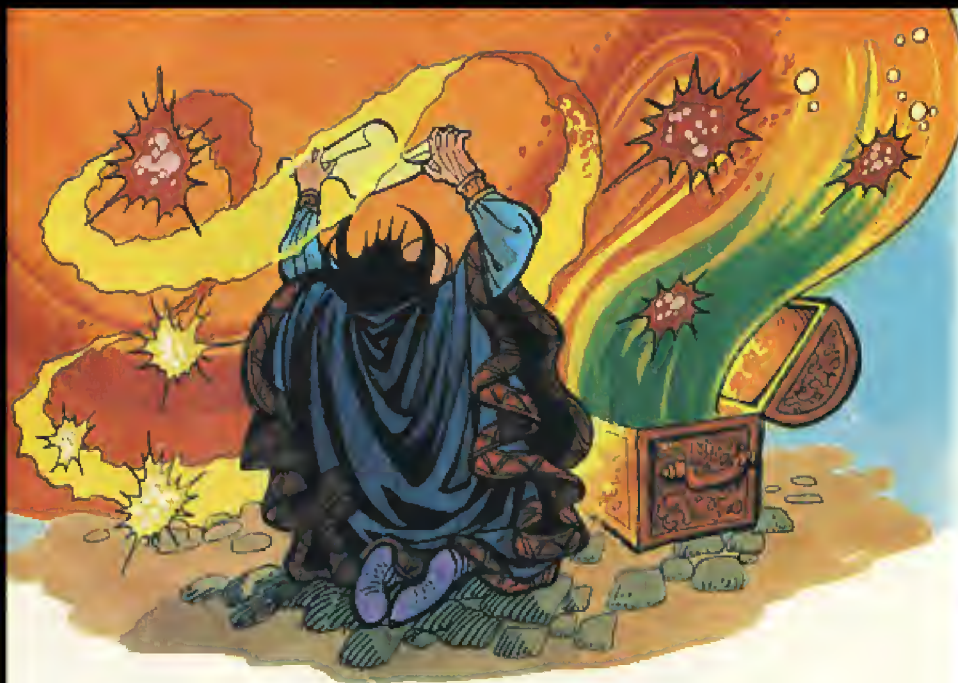


Kelek's bony hand reached forward to open the chest. Suddenly a giant bat flew into the cavern. Kelek started to shoo it away, but the bat changed form and became...



... Charmay!

"You didn't really imagine that your spell would last, did you, Kelek?" she cried. "I could never stay an ally of yours for long. But I *will* give you some friendly advice. Do not open that treasure chest. No one can control the Treasure of Time. No one!"



“Too late!” cried Kelek. He opened the chest.

The room filled with explosions of light. Flares of red and gold swirled around the evil sorcerer. Green smoke filled the room. Bolts of blue lightning flamed around Kelek, and sparks leapt off his fingertips.

Finally, the smoke cleared, the eerie lights faded.

Standing before the amazed trio was a young man.

“Look—it’s Kelek!” cried Elkhorn. “But he looks to be about 20 years old!”

“Yes, indeed it is I,” grinned the young Kelek. “Now, say your goodbyes, fools! I believe a nice fireball will make a lovely death for the three of you! Ha ha!”



The young Kelek pulled back his arm and prepared to throw the powerful fireball that would destroy Strongheart and his companions.

"Fire!" he cried.

But instead of a whirling, hot mass of flame, a single spark floated through the air and landed at Strongheart's feet.



Charmay was the first to speak. "I warned you not to try to control time, Kelek. You lost your old age. But with it, you lost the knowledge and experience that gave you your power. You cannot hurt us now."



Kelek knew that Charmay was right. He fell to his knees, crying like a baby.

Charmay took the magic scroll out of his hands. She and her companions left the ancient cavern, untouched by the once-powerful wizard.

Back in Charmay's chamber, Strongheart laughed at the memory of the mighty Kelek crying like a child. "How long will he be like that, Charmay?" asked the warrior.

"Not very long," was her reply. "It will take months—not years—for him to break the enchantment. But in the meantime, we will not have much to fear from his evil. Poor Kelek. He didn't realize that the Treasure of Time—is Time itself!"





\$1.95

ISBN 0-939766-70-1

